Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Athena Finds Her Confidence (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 2) by Josef Hill, Elena Paige", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/848. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Josef Hill , Elena Paige

Athena Finds Her Confidence (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 2)

Australia (2017)

TAGS: Athena Cecrops Poseidon





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Athena Finds Her Confidence (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 2)
Country of the First Edition	Australia
Country/countries of popularity	Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2017
First Edition Details	Elena Paige, *Athena Finds her Confidence*, Taki and Toula Time Travelers, Book 2. Moonee Ponds, Vic.: Angelos Publishing, 2018, 33 pp.
ISBN	9781925557480
Genre	Didactic fiction, Fiction, Illustrated works, Mythological fiction, Time-Slip Fantasy*
Target Audience	Children (5–10 (primary school age))
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
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Creators



Josef Hill (Illustrator)



Elena Paige (Author)

From her website: “Elena Paige is a children's and teen author with a background in counselling psychology.” She has written numerous series for children; among them *Taki and Toula Time Travelers*, *The Magicians*, *Evie Everyday Witch* and more.

Source:

Official website (accessed: September 24, 2019)

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Additional information

Summary

In this time-traveling series first installment, two modern day Greek children from Crete, Toula (8 years old girl) and Taki (6 years old boy) find strange traditional Greek shoes called tsarouhia in their mother's chest. They find out that wearing these shoes enable them to time-travel to ancient Greece.

In this book, they arrive at the time of the competition between Athena and Poseidon for the founding of a new city. They help Athena find her courage and win the competition against Poseidon through her gift of olives. At the end of the book there is brief information about the mythological contest between Athena and Poseidon.

Analysis

In various time-traveling stories we encounter children from various countries who are transported back to ancient Greece (for example, in Stella Tarakson's *Hopeless Heroes* series, reviewed in this survey). In this series, the author specifically chose two Greek children for this voyage. The time-traveling tool, the traditional shoe, also emphasizes the unique Greek setting. The story focuses on the adventures the children share in ancient Greece and there is no reference to their everyday lives or how they are changed by this experience.

In this story, the children find themselves in the midst of the competition for the naming of a new city, judged by King Cecrops. Poseidon is described as haughty and unpleasant while Athena is, rather uncharacteristically, described as scared and weak. The children help Athena believe in herself and her ability and even encourage her to use olives as her gift to the city. This is a very unusual description of one of the most powerful and intelligent goddesses of the Greek Pantheon. In this story, she appears completely lacking self-confidence and even cries a lot, despite the fact that there is no story in Greek mythology in which Athena actually cries.

The focus of the story is to empower the children who are helping the goddess and saving the day. However, the presentation of the male Poseidon as confident and arrogant and the female Athena as weak also raises questions. The author has a background in psychology and therefore she focuses on teamwork and building confidence, yet this

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dichotomy (which perhaps was not intended) between the strong male god and the seemingly weaker female goddess cast a poorer light on the Greek goddesses of mythology, as if they were not able to stand on their own.

As part of her children-empowerment theme, the author deliberately changes the common conventions about Greek mythological heroes (Hercules, Athena) in order to put the focus on the children and emphasize the point that anyone can be a hero if they find their inner courage.

In the previous installment in the series the children helped Hercules, and there is clearly no tendency to make them help only female characters. However, making Athena as a weeping woman, in one of the most iconic stories about her, is an intriguing choice.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Athena Cecrops Poseidon
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Conflict Friendship Humour Magic Travel

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